

# We Are Not The Robots

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# Boston Dynamics

"Boston Dynamics' mission is to imagine and create exceptional robots that enrich people's lives. Discover Spot, Stretch, and our other robots" reads the firm's website. Currently members of the public can purchase a Spot, their dog-like robot offering, and control it via user friendly software and interaction. They have funding, jobs, and ~300 employees. The longer term goals of robot firms include assisting humans during emergency crisis situations, and potentially revolutionising the service and manufacturing industry sectors of business. Robots might forever change the global economic marketplace.

# Robots Dancing

Rather than humans dancing and imitating older robots, the Boston Dynamics firm has sort of flipped the script and gotten their robots to dance, sometimes imitating humans, and sometimes executing novel and agile movements. This is part of their advertising and hiring strategy. It makes for visually appealing eye candy film.



# Human Choreographer

The firm hired the dance choreographer Monica Thomas to help them in the production of these films. She had a lot of "autonomy" and learned by viewing the robots and then danced out the dances herself with her own body, just like many dance choreographers do. Then she did work with engineering teams on programming movements into the robots' "bodies". She said "Towards the end of working with Spot, I could sense that there is something about leg pairings and their transitions that could make a really compelling rhythm or design to guide choreography, but I don't quite know what it is that I'm imagining or how to even conceptualize it. And that is very exciting. I would absolutely do it again".

# Knockoffs Causing Public Fear

Robots have been depicted for quite some time in diverse media across the canon. From early scientific work, science fiction, literary fiction like Sigfrid von Shrink in Gateway by Frederik Pohl, to cinema like C-3PO and R2-D2 in Star Wars or the eponymous WALL-E... to so many more other works.

Robots can appear "good", "bad", or "neutral", simply doing as programmed. In any case, in what may perhaps have been lowkey inspired by the film for Greyhound by Swedish House Mafia or the Transformers films, and what was certainly inspired by the Boston Dynamics marketing:



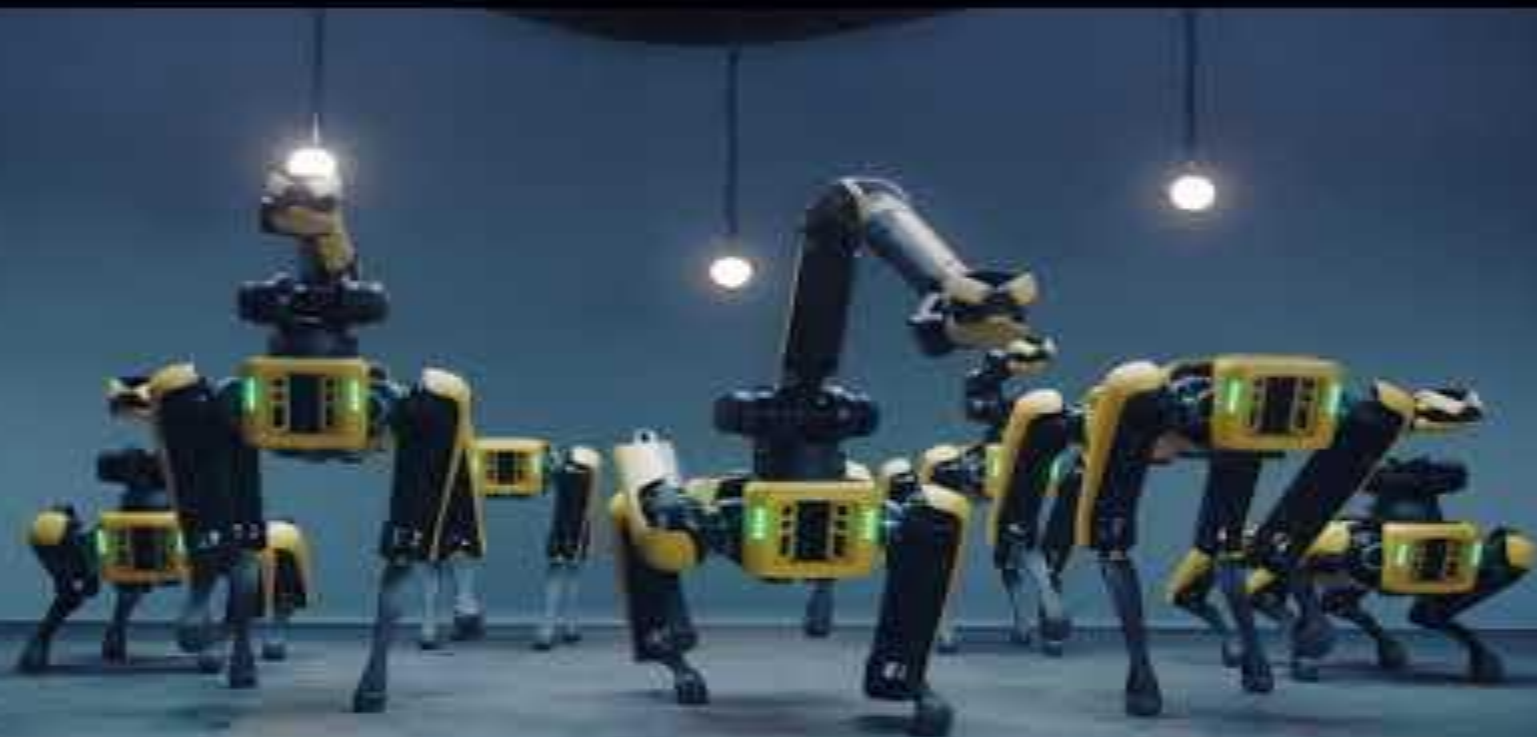
# The Reality And The Truth

A recent Aeon headline read "Truth Is Real". That is the current state of affairs in the world, we have to remind people that yes, relativism and moral relativism can be True too, e.g. different people want different things and have different lived experiences and understandings of documents and art. But also we must be informed, as former US president Barack Obama recently reminded us from Stanford. And the Truth is that most likely the near and mid future of robots will be a net "good" for humanity at large in an objective and measurable way.



# However...

Boston Dynamics has its roots in military funding. And real controversies have taken place including a New York art school techno prankster team MSCHF letting loose a Spot with a paintball gun strapped to its back, and a Spot patrolling the streets, controlled by the New York City Police Department. As deepfake technology improves and predatory media firms are incentivised to deceive us for their profit motive, be intellectually cautious and stay wary.



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